

Daniel Ellsberg's remarks from Chapter IV

based on the most likely possibilities in the Democratic Party, or anyone who may conceivably replace Mr. Nixon as a Republican candidate, is going to compel or lead any major turn-around in foreign policy perspective.

Perhaps another answer is, nobody <sup>whom</sup> / we can come up with as a third-party candidate -- and of course I am not thinking of George Wallace either -- would be someone representative of real new political movement.

Perhaps such a person too is not of the kind that can release himself from the shackles of World War II thinking. Nevertheless, I am inclined to at least become much more interested in that alternative.

EDWARDS: I would like to ask Mr. Ellsberg if in addition to the Papers printed in The New York Times that there were some documents you wished they had published that they did not publish?

ELLSBERG: I felt for a couple of years there really is no substitute for having very large chunks of this available for the citizens and Congress to look at. I felt, from the beginning when I looked at this, it was not a question of a page here and a page there and a collection of sensational secrets.

In fact, I was asked by Members of Congress whether I could give them a list of some examples of some fairly dramatic points. I said, "It's not like that." What you have to be able to do is read enough of this in sequence to get, for example, a

feeling for what is not there at all.

When you see a document here, a document there, one can say that is not representative; that there must have been something more sensible, more humane, more concerned that month somewhere else in the files. And you really have to read about 3,000 to 5,000 pages before you begin to get a very strong sense of confidence, which accompanies the sinking feeling, that such things are not there.

That is the main answer to your question. Secondly, there are individual documents that, if I had been selecting, I would have put in, but I don't think that is of major importance. Everyone would choose differently.

However, as the journalists have limitations of space, it may be, I suppose, difficult to give a lot of space to the earliest <sup>periods.</sup> pages. I guess if there were two large chunks that I would like to see in print, one would be the entire sweep of intelligence estimates. I think The New York Times must have made a decision not to put any of those in verbatim, and to me, the most eye-opening and stunning aspect of the reading was to read how accurate the intelligence estimates <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ primarily CIA and State Department analysts had been over the years. That threw this question of presidential responsibility into a very sharp light and raised many pertinent questions.

The other chunk would be that which covered the 1945 to 1954 period, including the Geneva Conference. I think that reading ~~that~~ <sup>than any other portions</sup> had more effect on my own attitudes toward the war and toward the legitimacy of our involvement.

So long as one is able to think of this as a civil war that one has wandered into for whatever reasons, one doesn't question the legitimacy and one thinks that the United States was simply adding to the burden of a war of the Vietnamese people that would be going on anyway.

To read the history from 1945 on -- in some detail -- is to have that attitude shattered; and that worked a very great change in my own thinking, not only about the war but about what the responsibilities were of an American citizen who <sup>happened</sup> ~~professed~~ to have this knowledge. So I hope that does come out.

DOW: Do you think, Dr. Ellsberg, that The Times had that data available from the 1945 to 1954 period?

ELLSBERG: From what they have published, they had it available.

I can understand the <sup>reluctance</sup> ~~reaction~~ that a lot of people have <sup>to</sup> ~~going back that far.~~  
In fact, I found over the last couple of years, even now talking <sup>to</sup> of people who had fully authorized access to this, <sup>that</sup> to get them to read <sup>parts</sup> even a year or two earlier <sup>(than 1961)</sup> was difficult because of the attitude that "that is past history and is no longer relevant."

I understand the attitude. I didn't read the earlier part myself until the very last. I went backwards in fact. What I found was that year by year my perception of the ~~work~~ <sup>war</sup> changed kaleidoscopically as I peeled off one year after another of American involvement.

When you get back to the 1945 and 1950 period, I found out that it's very stunning. I think that The New York Times felt that with the limited amount of space they had to concentrate on the more dramatic and more recent material. But I do hope that Congressmen and citizens will really take the effort to read that earlier part of the Papers.

RASKIN: I would like to say something again about the situation at the end of the Second World War and see where that brings us in terms of now.

The Pentagon Papers show us how a group of men undertake to manage an empire. They show how there was no end to which they wouldn't go to pursue their particular objectives so long as they were within the limits of attempting to avoid a nuclear war.

And indeed, from time to time, even that "option" seemed like something they were prepared to think seriously about implementing. What we have seen among our elite is a group of people active in the name of the society who arrogated much to themselves, pretty much going their own particular way without reference to anyone but their own clique.

They were interested in creating a reality: that of domination in Southeast Asia at whatever the cost. It is that